



Tapu'itea

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Wednesday
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2006

OFFICIAL AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT WEEKLY NEWSLETTER Vol. I, No. 15

First Lady & Beautify Your Environment Committee to launch new project: “A Healthy Island Home, A Clean Island Community or Komiti Tumama”

(UTULEI) - For the past year in American Samoa, First Lady Mary Ann Tulafono, chairperson of the Beautify Your Environment (BYE) Committee –a volunteer group– has been promoting and helping to beautify your villages and cleaning up the local environment.

The major clean-up project of individual village and family competition last year in search of Best Village and Best Yard & Garden in the Eastern, Central, Western and Manu'a districts, in partnership with the Office of Samoan Affairs, was an overwhelming success. The First Lady and her hardworking committee of women and men will launch this Friday a new project called: “A Healthy Island Home, A Clean Island Community or Komiti Tumama” – new efforts, in the words of Mrs. Mary Ann Tulafono, to revive a once popular role for women in the village and county level to lend a hand and take up the responsibility to promote health and cleanliness within its respective districts.

“The new project for the committee comes from an old program that has been dormant for many years in our island home, and the committee is resurrecting its spirit, purpose and intent to take it to a higher level of health and cleanliness in raising standards and awareness of hygiene issues in our homes and villages,” said the First Lady. “A Healthy Island Home, A Clean Island Community, or Komiti Tumama, as a project promotes and ensures general cleanliness by selecting women of the respective villages to lead the charge in promoting healthy homes and a clean environment.”

At the official launch of the community project this Friday, 9am at the Convention Center in Utulei, wives of senior village matai have been invited by BYE to contribute to the project through dialogue and discussions as a formality in formation of this new undertaking in the Territory.

“I am very positive about the Komiti Tumama project and how it can fully develop into this island-wide cleaning system that benefits our homes and our environment,” said the First Lady. “The worrying concerns and disturbing pictures will never leave our minds and our sights until we have this system in place.”

The committee efforts will include promotion of cleanliness and keeping the home clean while educating the people on how to make their homes safe and clean, minimize the chances of disease (for example, illnesses transmitted by vectors, parasites, rodents or waste), and to know what to do in case of emergencies or disasters.

“This project will promote healthy practices in our daily living that will impact the health and wellbeing for all of us in the Territory,” said the First Lady. “It is our hope that reaching out to the community will be a two-way street of maintaining good health and a cleaner place we all are proud to call home.”

HISTORICAL NOTES

By: Stan Sorensen, Historian, Office of the Governor

On June 28, 1906, "Congress provided for the acknowledgement of deeds in American Samoa, to be attested by the certificate of the governor."

On June 29, 1905, Commander Charles Brainard Taylor Moore, Governor of American Samoa, issued his "Regulation No. 6-1905: License of Dogs," and "License and Registration of Stallions and Bulls."

On June 30, 1907, it was reported that "over 30 miles of fairly good roads, requiring bridges" had thus far been built in American Samoa."

On June 30, 1908, the Papatea School was opened at Ta'u, Manu'a. Vaega, a London Missionary Society pastor, was the only teacher.

On June 30, 1914, there were, "in addition to village pastors' schools, 8 recognized schools in Tutuila; 6 were sectarian, 2 island government, 3 were for boys, 3 for girls, and 2 for both boys and girls. These schools were being taught by a teacher from the United States, by Catholic Marist Brothers, by Catholic Marist sisters, by representatives of the London Missionary Society, and by Mormon elders."

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On June 30, 1926, in its End-of-Year Report for Fiscal Year 1926, American Samoa's Department of Public Health recorded the following diseases: bronchitis: 1,030 cases; acute catarrhal fever: 16; acute hemorrhagic conjunctivitis ("pinkeye"): 1,022; dengue fever: 2; acute enterocolitis: 136; erysipelas: 1; filariasis: 484; gangrene: 1; simple influenza: 6; ascariasis: 1,875; uncinariasis: 40; leprosy: 2; measles: 1; pneumonia: 47; skin diseases: 250; tetanus: 3; tonsillitis: 9; tuberculosis: 72; typhoid fever: 11; gonorrhea: 2; whooping cough: 35, and yaws: 652.

On June 30, 1942, the Navy Base Report for Tutuila stated that the sailors and Marines "had two bowling alleys, but not enough room for athletic fields; a recreation center had been approved, but not yet built. Mail delivery was irregular, arriving roughly every three weeks...The acute shortage of cooking gear was blamed on the necessity of dividing the Marines into many small camps, where they could not be served by large central mess halls. Tarpaulins, needed as protection for just about everything against the incessant rainfall, were also scarce. The lack of tarpaulins contributed to the deterioration of supplies and equipment, particularly electric gear. Trucks, jeeps and other motorized vehicles were also scarce, and the Marines were borrowing trucks from the contractors to unload supplies. In 1942, the 2nd Marine Brigade established a recreation center with facilities for for forty-two men at a time, so that those stationed in outlying posts could come in now and then and enjoy billiards, ping pong, cards, movies, and so on."

On June 30, 1949, the Navy Department provided the United Nations with these population figures for the Territory of American Samoa: 1900: 5,659; 1920: 7,776; 1926: 8,676; 1930: 12,908; 1945: 16,493; 1949: 18,353.

On July 1, 1951, the U.S. Department of the Interior assumed official administration of American Samoa.

On July 4, 1922, the new Governor of American Samoa, Captain Edwin Taylor Pollock, "caused concern in Apia [i.e., among the *Mau* and the New Zealand Administration] when he read out the *Declaration of Independence* at the 4 July celebrations, and then had it published, in Samoan, in *O Le Fa'atunu*, the territory's official newsletter."

Governor Togiola addresses comments made by Congressman Faleomavaega concerning air traffic tower and funding

(UTULEI) – Governor Togiola Tulafono today addressed comments recently made by Congressman Faleomavaega Eni in regards to the much-needed air traffic control tower for Pago Pago International Airport.

The following is the official statement from Governor Togiola:

"I think the Congressman should try and work with us to address this problem we have at the airport instead of blocking this effort. We need to build a tower building, and we should begin to build that project. If Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is not willing to equip and man this tower, then the Congressman should have proposed funding to Congress to accomplish this instead of blocking the project. We need to bring back control of our airspace back to our own airport, but we cannot make any attempts if we have no facility. The frequency of international flights now, in and out of Pago Pago International Airport, has increased substantially, and we should all band together to propose again the return of air traffic control back to Pago Pago International. In his position, the Congressman can be instrumental in getting FAA to do this.

As for the Congressman saying that he has asked the FAA to hold on to the \$2 million until this matter is resolved, I don't know that Faleomavaega can do this. I am trying to find out what has happened. The money was appropriated for constructing a tower building, and we found a plan we can build for less than \$2 million. If the Congressman is concerned with FAA not being able to provide funding for the equipment and staffing the tower, then he should not interfere with constructing the tower building. I am sure we can jointly sort these problems out while the building is being constructed. I hope Faleomavaega is working on legislation to help fund the equipment for the tower and for staffing it when completed.

Without a control tower, FAA had contracted a Washington company to handle advisory services and their contract expires September 30th of this year. We are not going we are not going to be able to support the advisory service after the contract. We are cutting back on our budget call for FY2007. I am going to advise FAA of this problem and the need for them to continue this service for Pago Pago International Airport."

ASG RADIO PROGRAM

With: Governor Togiola Tulafono

Saturdays @ 7a.m.

On: Showers of Blessings-FM 104.7

Call 699-8123 or 699-8124

Share important activities

with our ASG workforce as well as the citizens of American Samoa.

Email your articles, announcements, pictures or other information to:

tapuitea@amsamoa.gov.as

Deadline for submissions is Thursday @ noon.

Governor Togiola comments on Hawaiian Air – Honolulu check-in incident and more

(UTULEI) – Governor Togiola Tulafono replied to media inquiries today regarding the Honolulu check-in incident at Hawaiian Airlines, where he and First Lady-Mary Ann Tulafono were required to stand in line to check-in, and other Hawaiian Air related matters.

The following is Governor Togiola's official statement concerning the incident and also includes comments regarding Hawaiian Air:

HAWAIIAN AIR – HONOLULU AIRPORT CHECK-IN INCIDENT

"It is true that Hawaiian Air, for the first time, on Sunday, June 25th, refused to allow our Honolulu Office director to check us in –my wife and I– for a flight home. This is the first time this has ever happened over the many years of traveling as Governor.

It is also true that for the first time in the past few months, I have publicly accosted Hawaiian Airlines for their discriminatory treatment of our people in operating their monopoly to American Samoa with their rough and discourteous service and their excessive fares and fees. If this is a consequence, then I am not surprised. It is true to the character of what we are dealing with, and standing in line for me is a very small price to pay for exposing their abusive practices and for trying to restrain their economic assault on our people. If this, coincidentally, is their showing of some new concern for airport security, then I am always concerned to comply with the security regulations at every airport.

This is the first time Hawaiian Air has moved away from the usual check-in courtesy afforded to the Governor. I do not plan on communicating any concerns about this incident to the airline. I don't know if the action was in retaliation for my views about their air service to Pago Pago and my request that they pull out of the route. But, it sure is a coincidence."

HA SPOKESMAN SAYS AIRLINE HAVE NO PLANS OF LEAVING

"Hawaiian Air spokesman Keoni Wagner is quoted in the media saying the airline has no plans to discontinue service. By saying they have no plans to discontinue service, they are acknowledging their legal responsibility to do so. I believe that's why they purposely were ambiguous with their response. They are not allowed to leave the market until a replacement carrier is found and prepared to fly."

HA HAS NOT REPLIED TO INVITATION TO WITHDRAW FROM PAGO PAGO

"Hawaiian Air has not responded to my letter inviting the airline to withdraw from the Pago Pago-Honolulu route. I expect an answer from them because if their answer is to refuse to withdraw, then I have other actions I need to take. Once they respond and inform me that they will not withdraw, then other actions will follow."

NO PARTICULAR AIRLINE IN MIND AS REPLACEMENT CARRIER

"There is no particular airline in mind, and I am not doing this to give any particular airline or person a chance to operate a new airline. The process provides that once Hawaiian Air withdraws, the U.S. Department of Transportation will begin the process of inviting other carriers to fly to American Samoa. The process will be strictly in accordance with the laws of the United States and nothing less."

ANTITRUST ACTION VIA DEPT OF JUSTICE

"Anti-trust action requires a request to the Department of Justice to undertake an investigation and prosecute an action if they deem the complaint justified. I fully intend to file that complaint when the time comes. If Hawaiian Air withdraws in accordance with my invitation, I may choose not to file a complaint. But only if I determine that justice for our people is achieved."

Governor Togiola addresses concerns raised by Congressman Faleomavaega and Senate President Lolo about Hawaiian Air

(UTULEI) – Governor Togiola Tulafono today addressed concerns raised recently by Congressman Faleomavaega Eni and Senate President Lolo Moliga in the event that Hawaiian Air accepts the Governor's invitation to withdraw from the Pago Pago market.

The following is the official statement from Governor Togiola:

PROCEDURE & PROCESS OF AIR SERVICE WITHDRAWAL

I would have thought the Congressman understood the procedure. If Hawaiian Air withdraws, we have 90 days to work with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to obtain the services of another airline.

Within that time, Hawaiian Air is required by law to continue its services to American Samoa until replaced. If no airline is secured within 90 days, Hawaiian Air is required by law to continue to serve American Samoa until a replacement carrier is obtained. The airline obtained will be one of the United States certified carriers that DOT will appoint to be our Essential Air Service (EAS) carrier.

I have said before how I am planning to ask DOT to get bids or Request For Proposals in order to make the process competitive, and for us to be able to review them and make a recommendation. It's unusual, but it is the only opportunity we can at least come close to the intention of deregulation, and that is to acquire these services through competition. Competition was supposed to be what was needed that would stabilize fares and prices. We do not have competition, and the least we could do is obtain it by bidding the EAS requirements.

I have no particular airline in mind, and I am certain the legal process will produce an airline that will provide the necessary seats and frequencies that will adequately serve our market, as well as reasonable fares and charges. Those are the requirements of the law, and I have every intention of making sure that we work closely together with DOT in the process.

MARGIN OF PROFIT FOR HAWAIIAN AIR ON PAGO PAGO

My letters to Hawaiian Air provided the information about how much we have calculated Hawaiian makes from the excessive fares they charge. We have estimated that amount to be at least \$11.5 million. In reviewing some past information, I found that when the airlines were filing their information with DOT for each route, Hawaiian showed substantially higher profits from American Samoa as compared to its other routes. My recollection was over 50% profits for American Samoa. This was achieved with substantially lower fares. Since that time the fares between Samoa and Hawaii have nearly doubled. In its other routes to the West Coast, it showed profits to be around 5%.

FALEOMAVAEGA AND LOLO NOT ASKING TO LOWER FARE. WHY NOT?

Congressman Faleomavaega and Senate President Lolo are asking questions about contingency plans should Hawaiian leave. People in these offices do not need to ask these questions. They should know before asking the questions the legal procedures required for obtaining a replacement carrier for the market if Hawaiian withdraws. We follow the legal procedure in place when Hawaiian withdraws from the market. There is already a mechanism in federal law to do it, and these folks should know that by now. Their respective staffs include highly paid attorneys who can do the research and advise them just like my staff does.

It seems to me that the only purpose for these ostensibly concern questions is to deflect attention away from the real issues. Neither Congressman Faleomavaega nor Senate President Lolo has acknowledged the fact that Hawaiian's airfares are excessive. They have not yet acknowledged the discriminatory policies of Hawaiian Airlines toward American Samoa travelers. They should at least join us in asking Hawaiian Air to lower its fares to appropriate levels.

Since we have determined that Hawaiian can be reasonably profitable with a \$500.00 roundtrip airfare between American Samoa and Honolulu, they should join us in asking Hawaiian to lower its airfares accordingly. Why not? Why are they not asking to lower these high fares?"

ASCC Supports Multi-Disciplinary Team to Fight Child Abuse

By James Kneubuhl, ASCC Press Officer

During a five-day Interagency Forum last week, representatives of the local education, social services (medical and division), public safety, and mental health sectors met at a special Forum to pool their insights towards the shared goal of creating a Territorial Child Abuse Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT). The participants hope to create a single entity, made up of representatives from existing agencies, which can respond to cases in the Territory abused children with just one interview.

The main organizers of the Forum, Tafa Mamea of the University Center for Excellence and Developmental Disabilities at the American Samoa Community College (ASCC), and Florence Ainuu and Faaalu Iuli of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS), convened the Forum from June 19-23 at the Tradewinds Hotel. They invited representatives from a wide cross-section of agencies involved in the well-being of American Samoa's children to share ideas on formulating a means whereby their respective agencies can work collaboratively to everyone's benefit. The UCEDD provided funding for the Forum.

"My concern is that victims with disabilities may go through several interviews from responders," explained Mamea. "Under the current system, the responders operate independently according to their own priorities and procedures, and this can sometimes work to the detriment of the children they serve. Take, for example, a victim of child abuse. The child or his or her family first give their story to the police, who file their own report. Next, they see a medical examiner, who does a separate report. To see a case prosecuted, they must then repeat the process with DHSS, and yet again with the Attorney General's office. This not only generates four separate reports on a single case, but also forces the victim to re-live the abuse again and again. In many areas of the United States, an MDT handles cases like this in a manner less stressful on the victim, while still providing all the necessary information for both the treatment of the victim and the prosecution of the perpetrator. We believe an MDT could have similar benefits here in American Samoa."

While the idea of an MDT may sound simple, making such an entity official will require a substantial amount of work, ranging from planning and agreements among the stakeholder agencies to changes in the current law. Bearing in mind the wide scope of the project, the Forum organizers brought together personnel from as many of the stakeholder agencies as were able to attend. Participants present for the entire week included Rep. Letuli Toloo of the House of Representatives; Diana Ameperosa and Dr. Tom Harwood from the Department of Education; Capt. Moeli Tavai and Officer Kilisitina Simanu from the Department of Public Safety; Leuuga Turner and Maelega Amani from LBJ Hospital; Sulita Smith of Catholic Social Services; and Jacinta Brown of the Office of Territorial and International Criminal Intelligence and Drug Enforcement (OTICIDE). Many other representatives from the Territory's social service agencies also joined the forum on days when their schedules permitted.

Three specialists from off-island made significant contributions to the forum. Suzanne L. Tiapula, a former prosecutor in American Samoa who now works for the American Prosecutors Research Institute in Alexandria, VA, brought with her the valuable perspective of someone familiar with both the American Samoa justice system and the methods employed stateside for handling cases involving children. Clinical psychologist Dr. Lynn Albertson and social worker Kelen Flores, both with the Hawaii State Government, also shared insights based on their many years of experience. Some may recall Dr. Albertson from the two years she spent working in American Samoa during the late 1990s.

During the Forum, each day followed a particular theme, beginning on Monday with an introduction to Interagency MDT Team Building. On Tuesday, the participants focused on Systems Enhancement, Challenges and Solutions, followed by Community Awareness on Wednesday and Program Development on Thursday. The Forum culminated on Friday with an MDT mission statement, protocol, and a follow-up two week action plan to present the recommendations and outcomes of the Forum to American Samoa's and determine the next step towards the formation of a Territorial Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Team.

Besides Mamea, ASCC participants at the Forum included Vice President Dr. Seth Galea'i, who gave the welcoming remarks on the first day. Dr. Galea'i used the example of Christopher Columbus to illustrate how a new approach is sometimes necessary to solve existing problems. Although off-island commitments precluded her attendance earlier in the week, ASCC President Dr. Adele Satele-Galea'i attended the conclusion of the Forum, and gave a speech in which she stressed the importance of American Samoa creating its own culturally appropriate laws. "In most places, the norms of a society define what is acceptable or unacceptable," said the ASCC President. "Many of our current laws didn't come from us, but were adopted, which is perhaps why enforcement has proved to be such a challenge."

While Forum concluded with all of the participants excited about the possibilities and benefits of the proposed MDT, much more work lies ahead. Mamea, Iuli, Ainuu and representatives of the major stakeholder agencies will continue to meet over the next several months to refine the ideas from the Forum into a concrete proposal for the establishment of the MDT. The Interagency is anticipating a collaborative agreement amongst agencies to work on providing a better system in responding to child abuse cases.

"We are excited that representatives from all agencies have built a strong relationship during the Forum," said Mamea. "We have reached our goal on establishing a protocol and identifying specific cases that the MDT will review. There is much to do, but we all have assignments to follow through and will meet again within two weeks. This all could not have happened without the support of agencies sending representatives and the support of Department of Human and Social Services in allowing ASCC to network with them on training and technical assistance."



Tafa Mamea (far right), seen here with her UCEDD staff at ASCC, was one of the organizers of the recent forum for the establishment of a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) to stem the tide of child abuse in American Samoa.

(Photo: J. Kneubuhl)

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